

Habitat Happenings



News and Events from **Runge Conservation Nature Center** • January/February 2014

Serving nature and you®

Vitamin 'N'

Connecting with the natural side of things, and in the process reaping many health benefits.

Happy New Year! Time for your Vitamin 'N'! The staff at Runge is committed to a healthy lifestyle and they want to share it with you. You are invited to start the New Year (right) by getting outside more often, reconnecting with the natural side of things, and in the process reaping many health benefits.

There have been many articles recently highlighting the need for and the benefits of getting outdoors.

Richard Louv is the Co-founder and Chairman Emeritus of the Children & Nature Network, an organization supporting the international movement to connect children, their families and their communities to the natural world. He recently wrote an article on the organization's blog that quoted a few physicians. Here are some of their thoughts:

Stephen Pont, M.D., chair of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Section on Obesity, says, *"Connecting with nature has always been an important part of my life and now I encourage my patients to do the same."* He adds, *"Getting kids excited about nature is a natural fit. And the more nature experiences they have the more healthy habits they adopt."*

"Vitamin 'N' (the health benefits of time spent in nature) should find its place in the list of Essential Vitamins! If we stress a connection to the natural environment... we can lessen the lifelong effects of a stressful childhood including depression, obesity, behavior problems, drug use and risk-taking behavior," says Mary Brown, M.D., a past member of the AAP board of directors.

These are powerful suggestions and observations. Fortunately for our community, we have many opportunities to connect to the outdoors. I encourage you to take advantage of them, especially at Runge Conserva-

tion Nature Center. We are YOUR nature center. We will help you discover nature and in the process you will reap the health benefits which will increase your quality of life.

Not only will we help you start the year this way, but we will be highlighting many programs and activities throughout the year that will help you on this journey. Please visit our website, subscribe to our newsletter or come into the nature center to find out what we are offering – all year long!

—Robin Grumm,
Assistant Nature Center Manager

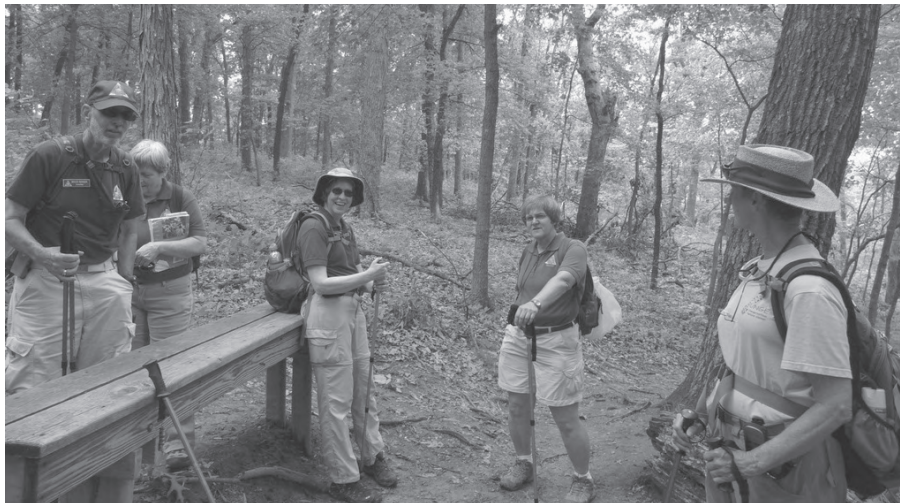


Runge Volunteers Believe in Vitamin 'N'

No fewer than a dozen Runge volunteers are involved in our hiking programs each month. These programs run the gamut from all-day to half-day treks involving die-hard hikers as well as leisurely strollers. There is something for everyone.

This month check out our hiking programs and see what fits your style and schedule. Visit us on Saturday, January 11 between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Our hiking leaders will be on hand to share their favorite hiking locations, explain how our programs work and give you tips on preparing for a hike. They will also be happy to hit the trails with you right here at Runge.

Resolve to get more Vitamin 'N.' Join one of our clubs. They are open to all without any obligation, except to enjoy. See you on the trails!



Hidden Treasures of Our Natural Community by Lance Merry

Enjoy a photographic journey exploring natural history treasures off the beaten path. One can dive underwater to witness fish interactions rarely seen, wade through bogs to see the best of our orchid fauna, and muddy their boots to discover the complicated lives of salamanders.

The Runge Conservation Nature Center is located on 97 acres in the heart of central Missouri. Come discover and enjoy the wonders of Missouri's habitats and its array of fish, forests, and wildlife. Runge CNC is located one-third mile north of Hwy 50 on Hwy 179 (330 Commerce Dr.).

HOURS:

Tuesday–Saturday: 8 AM–5 PM

Thursday: 8 AM–8 PM

Closed Sunday, Monday, and Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

TRAIL HOURS:

Open 6 AM–9 PM

For the Little Ones...

Connect with nature through exciting and age-appropriate opportunities.



Robin Grumm showing children a snake up-close and personal. These programs encourage parent and child participation in experiencing the outdoors.



discover nature programs...

- Help Missourians discover and explore nature
- Provide expert instruction and hands-on activities
- Are available statewide

Little Acorns

Children 3 through 6 years of age are welcome to attend a Little Acorns program with their caregiver. This program is limited to 20 children, plus caregivers.

REMINDER!

Parents/Guardians, when signing up for the **Little Acorns** programs please bring only the child(ren) that fall within the 3 to 6 years of age. This allows the Naturalist to provide a quality program to your child. Thank you.

Little Acorns Programs

January

Registration begins January 2.
573-526-5544

Snowflakes

Snow, snow, beautiful snow – step on a hunk and away you go! Come with us as we go outside (hopefully) to play in the snow at Runge! We will “make” snow inside, too.

January 10 • Friday • 10 AM
January 11 • Saturday • 10 AM
January 22 • Wednesday • 10 AM

February

Registration begins February 1.
573-526-5544

Rise and Shine

Is it time to wake up from a long winter's nap? February is the month to learn about groundhogs and whether or not they can answer that question.

February 7 • Friday • 10 AM
February 8 • Saturday • 10 AM
February 19 • Wednesday • 10 AM

BABES IN THE WOODS and **LITTLE ACORNS PLUS** programs are taking time off. We will return in the spring with fresh new programs for the youngest among us. Watch for those dates in the March/April newsletter.

Runge Calendar of Events - January

Get outdoors and experience what nature has provided for you.



January Events

Registration begins January 2.

Programs are free. Call 573-526-5544 to sign up for a program requiring registration. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on the waiting list.

Aquarium Feeding

January 3 • Friday • 11:30 AM

No registration required (all ages)

The fish and turtles are hungry. Join us by the aquariums and watch them eat.

Teen Club: Fly Tying

January 3 • Friday • 1–3 PM

Registration required (ages 12-18 years)

Get ready for fly-fishing by learning how to tie flies. Members of the Capital City Fly Fishermen will teach us the art of fly tying. After tying some of your own flies you'll be ready for our trout fishing trip for the TEEN club in March!

River Bluffs Audubon Society Presents: Dealing with Nuisance Animals Around the Home and Garden

January 9 • Thursday • 6:30–7:30 PM

No registration required (adults)

It's great to see wildlife! But sometimes there are problems when animals take too much interest in your house, yard, or garden. Rex Martensen, MDC, will talk about how you can protect your property and flower beds from critter damage.

What's Going On? A Hiking We Will Go!

January 11 • Saturday • 10 AM–2 PM

No registration required (all ages)

"Get into shape" is often a favorite New Year's resolution. We can help you achieve your goal through a variety of hiking opportunities this year. Learn about our monthly Hiking Club, Midweek Trekkers, and the new Discovery Hikes. These programs are volunteer-led and they will be available to share information about the hikes and tips for "hitting the trail!"

Lobby activities and information will be available throughout the time frame.

10 AM and 2 PM – Meet the hike leaders; learn more about hiking and then hit-the-trail at Runge.

Calling All Hikers

Runge Hiking Club and Midweek Trekkers are volunteer-led programs designed to provide opportunities for people to hike Missouri trails and learn about our plants, animals, and natural communities. Each month we'll meet at the nature center, carpool to one of Missouri's choice hiking spots and hike one or two of the best trails. Bring water, wear comfortable hiking shoes, and come dressed for the weather.

Midweek Trekkers: Canaan Conservation Area

January 15 • Wednesday • 8 AM–5 PM

Registration required (adults)

This month we'll travel to **Canaan Conservation Area** located in Gasconade County near Bland. We'll hike 8 miles exploring the area (****). Bring lunch.

The Runge Hiking Club: Three Creeks Conservation Area

January 18 • Saturday • 8 AM–5 PM

Registration required (adults)

Join us as we travel to **Three Creeks Conservation Area** located in Boone County (halfway between Columbia and Ashland) and enjoy a day in the winter woods of Missouri hiking 5-6 miles (***). Bring lunch.

Toddler Time

January 14 • Tuesday • 10–11 AM

No registration required (ages 0-3 years)

Enjoy nature with your little one through stories, songs, and animals. Plan to get outside with us too.

Nature's Needlers

January 16 • Thursday •

10:30 AM–Noon • 6–7:30 PM

Registration required (ages 18+)

A new year, a new focus. It's all about Missouri Prairies! This year's theme starts off with the bison quilt block and gives you a big picture look at the tallgrass prairie. Each month you will learn interesting facts about nature's best and receive a quilt pattern.

What's Going On? Musky Mustelids

January 18 • Saturday • 10 AM–2 PM

No registration required (all ages)

What has short legs, a long body, beady eyes, small rounded ears, and is stinky? The Mustelid family of weasels! Learn more through crafts and an exploration table.

Story Tree (storytime)

January 18 • Saturday • 1–2 PM

No registration required (all ages)

Stop in our lobby today and listen to one or more stories from our "Story Tree!" This is an informal nature story time for young children (and their adult person) to enjoy.

Bear Achievement #5

January 23 • Thursday • 6–7 PM

Registration required (Bear Cub Scouts)

Sign your scouts up to work on this achievement – talk to a conservation leader, learn about endangered and threatened Missouri animals, and make a bird "feeder" to take home.

Owl Prowl

January 23 • Thursday • 6:30–8 PM

Registration required (all ages)

Whooooo's there? Missouri Owls! Explore the fascinating lives of these winged nighttime hunters. Following the indoor program, we will take a short walk to look and listen for owls on our trails. Dress for the weather.

Eagle Adventure

January 25 • Saturday • 10 AM–2 PM

No registration required (all ages)

Eagle activities and crafts will be offered in the lobby at the nature center. Staff from Dickerson Park Zoo will be offering live eagle presentations at 10AM, 11AM, and 1PM. Bundle up and come on out. Refer to back page for additional information.

Trail rating system

*Easiest trail **Moderately Easy

***Moderate

****Moderately Difficult

*****Difficult

Runge Calendar of Events - February

Get outdoors and experience what nature is sharing with you.

February Events

Registration begins February 1.

Programs are free. Call 573-526-5544 to sign up for a program requiring registration. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on the waiting list.

Calling All Hikers

Runge Hiking Club, Midweek Trekkers, and Discovery Hikes are volunteer-led programs designed to provide opportunities for people to hike Missouri trails and learn about our plants, animals, and natural communities. Each month we'll meet at the nature center, carpool to one of Missouri's choice hiking spots and hike one or two of the best trails. Bring water, wear comfortable hiking shoes, and come dressed for the weather.

Half Day Discovery Hike: Three Creeks Conservation Area

February 15 • Saturday • 8 AM–Noon
Registration required (ages 8 and older)

Come discover **Three Creeks Conservation Area** with us and learn basic map reading and compass skills. Learn how to explore the outdoors with safety and confidence.

Midweek Trekkers: Bennett Spring State Park

February 19 • Wednesday • 8 AM–5 PM
Registration required (adults)

This month, we will travel to one of our most popular state parks– **Bennett Spring** and hike the Natural Tunnel Trail (7 miles, ***). Bring lunch.

The Runge Hiking Club: Painted Rock and Clarks Hill Conservation Areas

February 22 • Saturday • 8 AM–5 PM
Registration required (adults)

Enjoy views of the Osage River valley and watch for birds of prey from observation decks at **Painted Rock Conservation Area** located in Osage County. Then travel to **Clarks Hill Conservation Area** in Cole County for a climb that overlooks the Missouri River. You'll hike approximately 5 miles, ***. Bring lunch.

What's Going On? Groundhogs

February 1 • Saturday • 10 AM–2 PM

No registration required (all ages)

Celebrate Groundhog's Day! Stories, predictions, shadow games, and more will help you enjoy this midwinter day.

Adventure Birding–Winter Birds

February 8 • Saturday • 10–11 AM

Registration required (ages 11 and older)

This will be our introduction to a new monthly activity for people across the generations who have a common passion for birds. Come join experienced birders and find out more about the sport. We will begin with winter bird identification on the trails at Runge. Please dress for the weather. No previous experience is necessary. Binoculars and field guides will be available.

Toddler Time

February 13 • Thursday • 10–11 AM

No registration required (ages 0-3 years)

Enjoy nature with your little one through stories, songs, and animals. Plan to get outside with us too.

Design with Nature in Mind A recycled card-making activity

February 13 • Thursday • 6–8 PM

Registration required (women ages 14+)

Bring old magazines to recycle. Design and craft a colorful greeting card to take home. The leaders will FOCUS on a technique called Iris Folding. You will learn to fold old magazine pages into a work of art which will focus your eye (iris) on a favorite part of nature – birds, butterflies, insects, and more.

River Bluffs Audubon Society Presents: Where Do Missouri's Birds Go In Winter?

February 13 • Thursday • 6:30–7:30 PM

No registration required (adults)

Join Brad Jacobs, MDC, as he tells about a winter journey to Mexico and Central America to find Missouri's breeding birds. He will report what happened in visiting our state's conservation counterparts. He will talk about the projects supported by funds from the Audubon chapters and MDC and what is happening now with efforts to maintain populations of migratory birds.

Aquarium Feeding

February 14 • Friday • 11:30 AM

No registration required (all ages)

The fish and turtles are hungry. Join us by the aquariums and watch them eat.

Homeschool: Salamander Secrets

February 14 • Friday • 1–3 PM

Registration required (ages 8 and older)

Come unlock the secrets of Missouri salamanders' life history. Learn their diet, habitats, and behaviors. This program has an outdoor component. Please be prepared for any type of weather.

Story Tree (storytime)

February 15 • Saturday • 10–11 AM

No registration required (all ages)

Stop in our lobby today and listen to one or more stories from our "Story Tree!" This is an informal nature story time for young children (and their adult person) to enjoy.

Design with Nature in Mind A recycled card-making activity

February 15 • Saturday • 1–3 PM

Registration required (women ages 14+)

Refer to the February 13th description.

Nature's Needlers

February 20 • Thursday •

10:30 AM–Noon • 6–7:30 PM

Registration required (ages 18+)

The second program in our **Prairies** series is the Bluestem grass. This graceful plant has many benefits for us and wildlife. Be there for fun facts and a quilt pattern.

What's Going On? Valuable Vultures

February 22 • Saturday • 10 AM–2 PM

No registration required (all ages)

Yes! Vultures ARE valuable. Find out why these interesting bald headed, carcass eating birds are a necessity to nature through exploratory tables and activities.

Bear Achievement #5

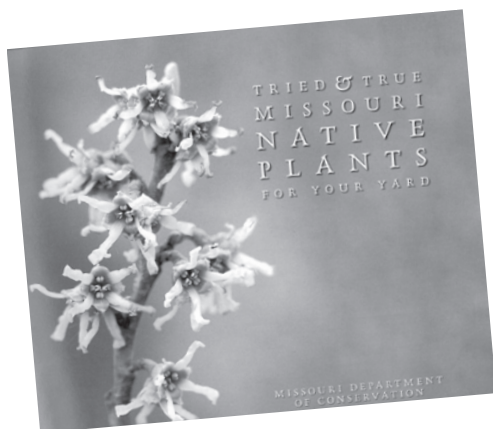
February 27 • Thursday • 6–7 PM

Registration required (Bear Cub Scouts)

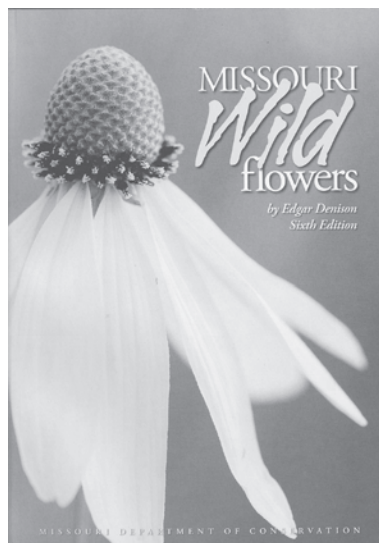
Sign your scouts up to work on this achievement – talk to a conservation leader, learn about endangered and threatened Missouri animals, and make a bird "feeder" to take home.

Gift Shop

20% off featured item for January and February.



Tried and True
Missouri Native Plants for Your Yard
\$4.80 plus tax.



Missouri Wildflowers
\$11.20 plus tax.

The Heritage Card discount does not apply to these items.

Holiday Happenings 2013

No registration required

Nature by Design – December 27 • Friday • 10 AM–3 PM

- Nature Crafts
- Refreshments
- I Spy Game
- And more!
- Exploration Table

Scheduled Activities (subject to change)

- | | |
|----------|---------------------------|
| 10 AM | Shapes in Nature Hike |
| 11 AM | Fireside Stories |
| 11:45 AM | Aquarium Feeding |
| 1 PM | Nature Games |
| 1:30 PM | Evergreen Relief Printing |
| 2:30 PM | Winter Weed Hike |

Designed by Nature – December 28 • Saturday • 10 AM–3 PM

- Nature Crafts
- Refreshments
- I Spy Game
- And more!
- Exploration Table

Scheduled Activities (subject to change)

- | | |
|---------|--------------------------|
| 10 AM | Puppet Show |
| 11 AM | Camo Trail Activity/Hike |
| 1 PM | Woodpecker Program |
| 2 PM | Nature Games |
| 2:30 PM | Nature Walk |

Boy Scout Packs

Check out a Pack and Discover Nature

Runge Nature Center is happy to offer assistance in meeting requirements for some nature-related scout badges. We have a variety of scout packs available with activities and information to assist you in your efforts. Please contact Becky at 573-526-5544 ext. 3408 for more information or to reserve one of the following scout packs.

Wolf Cub: Elective #13 - Birds

Bear Cub: Achievement #5 - Sharing Your World with Wildlife

Webelos: Naturalist and Forester Pack(s). Your choice of packs or a combination pack that has both badge requirement.

What's Going On? Programs and activities at Runge Nature Center

Every Saturday At Runge 10 AM–2 PM *No registration required (all ages)*

The Runge Nature Center offers exploratory tables, activities, and/or crafts every Saturday throughout the year. Stop in to see what adventure awaits you during our "What's Going On?" at the nature center.

Conservation Kids' Club

A club created for kids 6–12 years who love to explore nature and learn about wildlife.



Conservation Kids' club is a club created for kids 6-12 years who love to explore nature. When you make your reservation 573-526-5544, please provide the name of each member, their age, and the number of siblings attending the Little Acorns program to help us better prepare. Thank you.

Owl Pellets

January 21 • Tuesday • 6:30–8 PM

Registration required (January 2 through January 17)

Tonight you are an owl scientist. Your job is to discover what Missouri owls eat. You will pick apart an owl pellet, examine the bones, and try to reassemble the prey skeleton. Our Missouri owls depend on YOU knowing what they eat to survive.

Night Hike

February 18 • Tuesday • 6:30–8 PM

Registration required (February 1 through February 14)

Bundle up in your warm woollies and experience the night on our trails. Be prepared to walk a mile in the frosty woods, looking and listening. Afterwards warm up with hot cocoa and discover a little more about the sights and sounds of the winter woods at night.

Parents/Guardians! While big brother/sister attends Conservation Kids' Club, your preschooler (3 through 6 years of age) can be involved in a program at the same time. A preschool program will be available for siblings of Conservation Kids' Club members on Tuesday, January 21 and Tuesday, February 18. **Please limit your Little Acorn reservations to one program each month.**

Eagle Adventure



No registration required (all ages)

January 25 • Saturday
10 AM–2 PM

- Eagle activities in the Nature Center lobby
- Live Eagle Presentations by staff from Dickerson Park Zoo at 10AM, 11AM, and 1PM.
- Eagle Viewing at Marion Access on Hwy 179 with high-powered scopes

Native Plant Sale

March 22
10 AM–2 PM

Can you live in a world without native plants? Do you know how much your daily life depends on plants?

This is an event you should not miss! Buy native plants for your yard while learning how they impact our lives.